

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The Government of India has not received a request from the Government of NCT of Delhi in this regard. Moreover, the cash balances of the Government of NCT of Delhi form part of the general cash balance of Government of India. Till such time as the cash balance of NCT of Delhi is separated, the Government of NCT of Delhi does not require to borrow/take overdraft directly from the RBI.

[Translation]

Transfer of Property

2634. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received information about irregularities being committed due to facility of transfer of property in any part of the country available at four metropolitan cities;

(b) if so, whether amendment in the Central Act is being proposed; and

(c) if so, the time by which it is proposed to be done?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). No specific information in this regard has been received by the Government. However, a proposal for deletion of section 30(2) of the Registration Act, 1908 is under consideration. Views/comments of the State Governments/Union Territories administration have been invited on the proposal. A final decision on the proposal would be taken after receipt of such views. As such, it is not possible to indicate at this stage the time by which the said decision would be taken.

[English]

Smuggling of Drugs

2635. SHRI PINAKI MISRA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a huge quantity of heroin and other narcotics have been seized by airport authorities and other enforcement authorities in different parts of the country during the last six months;

(b) if so, the detail of the seizure;

(c) whether these seizures indicate an up-trend in the incidence of smuggling of narcotics, as compared to that in the corresponding period (April-June) in 1995 and 1994; and

(d) the steps taken to curb and prevent smuggling of narcotics and psychotropic drugs?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. As per information available large quantity of various drugs have been seized in different parts of the country during January to June, 1996. Their details are as given below :

January to June, 1996 (Provisional)

	Quantity in KG	No. of Cases
Heroin	672	751
Opium	1064	191
Ganja	19349	1386
Hashish	4579	534
Methaqualone	5	2

(c) Drug trafficking is a clandestine activity and, therefore, on the basis of seizure figures it cannot be said definitely whether it is increasing or decreasing during any given period. The quantity of narcotic drugs seized during April to June of 1994 and 1995 are given as under :-

Quantity in KG

	(April - June)	
	1994	1995
Heroin	163	362
Opium	381	558
Ganja	59151	20524
Hashish	1171	799
Methaqualone	3469	7179

(d) The enforcement agencies have been instructed to maintain the utmost vigil and step up enforcement efforts under the provisions contained in NDPS Act.

Agricultural Lending

2636. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the share of agricultural lending by banks has considerably declined in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the corrective measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). All Scheduled Commercial Banks (except foreign banks) are required to grant at least 18% of net

bank credit to agriculture. The performance of public sector banks in lending to agriculture for the last three years is given below :

(Rs. in Crores)

Year ended March	Net Bank Credit	Agricultural Advances	18% of NBC	Shortfall
1994	149913.62	21204.26 (15.05%)	25364.45	4124.19 (2.95%)
1995	169037.54	23512.93 (13.91%)	30426.75	6913.82 (4.09%)
1996	184390.76	26351.25 (14.29%)	33190.33	6839.08 (3.71%)

It may be seen from above that the agricultural advances have been rising. However, the share of such advances as percentage of net bank credit was showing a declining trend upto March 1995. This trend has been arrested and the percentage in respect of public sector banks has gone up as of March 1996 as compared to March 1995.

(c) Reserve Bank of India has advised all scheduled commercial banks to make every effort to achieve the stipulated target and sub-targets for lending to priority sector at the earliest. Banks were also advised that failure on their part to achieve the stipulated target and the sub-target/s could invite banks specific policy measures which could include raising of reserve requirements of withdrawal of refinance facilities and/or such other measures as deemed necessary. Banks which have not reached the agricultural lending sub-target of 18 per cent of net bank credit are required to make contributions to the Rural Infrastructural Development Fund (RIDF) equivalent to the shortfall subject to a maximum of 1.5% of Net Bank Credit in achieving the aforesaid sub-target. The following additional steps have been taken to ensure enhanced flow of credit to agricultural sector :

- Simplified application forms have been made available which are also in Regional languages;
- Prescription of scales of finance for crop loans as worked out by the technical committees constituted in each district for various crops and their uniform adoption by banks;
- Disposal of loan applications upto Rs.25,000 within a fortnight and those over Rs.25,000 within 8 to 9 weeks;
- Delegation of appropriate sanctioning powers to rural branch managers so that majority of loan application from weaker sections are sanctioned at branch level itself;
- Liberal guidelines in regard to requirement of collateral security by way of mortgage of

land/charge on land or third party guarantee;

- No margin is required for agricultural loans up to Rs.10,000/- for short term, medium/long term;
- The public sector banks have introduced the Agricultural Credit Card for farmers with good track record which enables farmers to secure production credit instantly and dispense with procedural formalities;
- To ensure timely and adequate credit for sustaining agricultural production, banks have been asked to extend a flexible line of credit in the form of cash credit facility which would meet their composite credit requirements;
- Bank have been asked to finance high-tech activities like aquaculture, floriculture, tissue-culture, bio-technology, etc; and
- Bank have been asked to draw up special credit plans with a view to achieving a distinct and marked improvement in the flow of credit to agriculture.

Income Tax Exemption to Resident of Ladakh

2637. SHRI P. NAMGYAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the permanent residents of Ladakh were granted exemption of Income Tax since 1962 in view of Chinese aggression and closure of traditional trade with Tibet and Sinkiang;

(b) whether representations had been made by people representing all walks of life of Ladakhis to successive Finance Ministers since 1988-89 for further exemption of Income Tax with effect from 1988-89 due to continuing poor economic conditions of the Ladakhis;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to examine the issue of granting exemption of Income Tax to the permanent residents of Ladakh; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir. Income tax exemption was provided to the residents of Ladakh through the Finance (No.2) Act, 1965 with retrospective effect from 1st April, 1962, in view of the position that the residents of Ladakh had suffered hardship and their trade had been adversely affected as a result of Chinese aggression.

(b) The Government have received some representations for exemption to the people of Ladakh from income tax from the assessment year 1989-90 and subsequent years.